

THE COMMONWEALTH.

E. E. HILLIARD, Editor and Proprietor.

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NO. 30

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OBSERVATIONS OF PASSING EVENTS.

SOMETIME ago we published in this column what had been given out as a postal law that any one who takes from the post office a letter and opens it by mistake is subject to \$200 fine. George B. Cortelyou, Postmaster General, has written a letter to the Charlotte Observer, declaring that there is no such law. No one is punishable for opening letters unless the opening is done with a wrong motive, such as disturbing correspondence or trying to fish into the secrets of others. The Charlotte Observer, like many other papers, was betrayed into the misstatement, and so was THE COMMONWEALTH. We are glad to correct it.

FOR ages and ages it has been the undivided opinion of mankind, as well as authority of the medical world, that leprosy was incurable. In modern times there have been new special treatments for the dread disease, and gradually there has grown a hope and then a belief that the disease could, after all, be cured. Recently it has been stated, as well as we remember now, that perhaps more than one case has been dismissed from an institution for the treatment of lepers in Louisiana, cured of the awful malady. While in this country one seldom hears of a case of leprosy, if the disease can really be cured it will be one of the greatest boons to mortal man and perhaps the greatest victory known to the world in the curative art.

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS says that it would be a matter for deep gratitude if some mathematician would figure out exactly the number of times William Jennings Bryan's name has appeared in print thus far in this good year of 1906. Well, it would be a task well nigh impossible to perform, for every paper and periodical in the land, whether friendly to Mr. Bryan or not, has printed his name at least once, no doubt, and most of them many more times. But Mr. Bryan is not so different from ordinary men but that he would be tickled just about half out of his wits to know that some one had made the calculation. And we opine that Mr. Bryan, like almost any other ordinary man who could afford it, would be willing to give a good bit of pocket change to know the number of times his name has been printed this year. Perhaps he might not be willing for everybody to know how much he would give to know it; but we have no doubt that he would give something to know it. Wouldn't you if you were in Mr. Bryan's place?

GOVERNOR JOSEPH H. FOLK, of Missouri, is a level-headed man. While the editor of THE COMMONWEALTH has never had the pleasure of knowing Governor Folk, we did have the pleasure of knowing two of his brothers at college, and nobler, more high-toned fellows we have never known anywhere. Governor Folk has proved equal to any and all emergencies, we believe, since he entered public life, and he has shown himself to be a man of great versatility of talents. But what we started out to say was that he has a good business eye in commercial affairs as well as in affairs political. Recently in an address to the retail merchants of his State he said: "No merchant can succeed without advertising in one way or another. Patronize your town papers; build them up, and they will build the town up and build up an increased trade and greater opportunities." Now, we have not quoted Governor Folk in the hope of securing a single line more of advertising from the business men of Scotland Neck, no, not at all; but we quote him in order to let our general readers know how well the opinion of a great man like Governor Folk accords with the opinion of newspaper editors.

POLITENESS and good manners are two of the crowning virtues of life. They are immensely cheap in point of cost but incalculable in point of value. Knowledge and wealth and social position may be a possibility, nay, may be an actual condition with one; and yet a want of politeness and good manners can largely negate these things which ought to be helpful to any and all who possess them. A young man's politeness counts much more with many people than his money or his college degree, and it ought to. Becoming behavior under all circumstances is a better adornment for a young man or a young woman than college degree, fine dress or any externals which giddy society might most appreciate. We remember how, in the days of our boyhood, a plain but courtly farmer, whose hands were hardened with toll and whose face was burned with the summer's sun, used to tell of the joy he experienced in observing the politeness and good manners of a certain young man who was always careful on the country church yard to speak to every one in a polite and agreeable way. This good and plous farmer, who has long since gone up to receive his reward, saw nothing so attractive in his young man friend as his politeness and good manners. To be sure, he was a strong, manly fellow in appearance, and was handsome to look upon; but these qualities were all the more striking because of his politeness and good manners. An old man was saying but yesterday that he meets many young people who seem to have forgotten, or never to have learned, how to be polite to older people. Let all the young remember that two of the crowning virtues of all life, and especially young life, are politeness and good manners everywhere.

HUMAN BLOOD MARKS. ONLY 82 YEARS OLD.

A tale of horror was told by marks of human blood in the home of J. W. Williams, a well known merchant Bae, Ky. He writes: "Twenty years ago I had severe hemorrhages of the Lungs and was near death when I began taking Dr. King's New Discovery. It completely cured me and I have remained well ever since." It cures Hemorrhages, Chronic Coughs, Settled Colds and Bronchitis and is the only known cure for Weak Lungs. Every bottle guaranteed by E. T. Whitehead & Co., Druggists. 50c and \$1.00. Trial bottle free.

HAS NO PARALLEL.

FRISCO DISASTER UNEQUALED IN MODERN TIMES.

Greater in Extent and Fatalities Than That Which Overwhelmed Chicago in 1871--Some Comparisons.

San Francisco's disaster will probably prove to be without modern parallel in history. Heretofore the great Chicago fire has been generally regarded in that light, but a comparison of the facts available so far tend to show this recent catastrophe as the most awful visitation of recent times, says the Washington Star.

When Chicago was burned in 1870 it had a population of about 300,000. San Francisco at this time must have 450,000 people in its gates, not counting the thousands affected in other towns near by. In the Chicago fire 70,000 people were made homeless. In the California city, if the estimates are reliable, the number will reach 300,000.

In addition to this, the location and environment of the two cities were such that Chicago's problem of what to do with her homeless was simple in comparison with that facing the far western city. Chicago was almost surrounded by open country to which the people turned for refuge. San Francisco is practically surrounded by water--the ocean on one side and the bay on two other sides. Railroads for the most part send their passengers into the city by ferries, and many of the docks were long ago made helpless by earthquake and fire.

So, for the most part, the thousands of people without shelter had to stay in the confines between sea and bay and were confronted with awful possibilities. The fire rushing along unchecked was pursuing them relentlessly. Fortunately, San Francisco is a city of hills, and on top of some of these many refugees found shelter. The beach, too, offered a spot of comparative safety.

In areas covered by the disaster and in probable loss of life and property the San Francisco catastrophe is greater than that of Chicago. The loss of the latter was about \$180,000,000, and considering that in San Francisco larger and more costly buildings were ruined, the probable loss will exceed even that enormous figure. So far any estimate of the loss would be mere guess work. A half dozen hotels and buildings alone would make up several millions, and the wide sweep of the fire makes it altogether probable that all records for financial loss will be broken. The loss of life during the Chicago fire was 200. That of San Francisco is estimated at from 300 to 1,000.

JUMPERS TAKE POSSESSION

Big Rush for Lots in Indian Territory Section Under Controversy.

Sapulpa, I. T.--Jumpers have taken possession of nearly every lot in the Noah Frank allotment, which joins this town, and over which there is controversy whether the government shall recognize the land as an allotment or as a townsite. As soon as the word was received from Muskogee that the secretary of the interior had ordered action withheld as to putting intruders off, there was a big rush to get possession of the lots, as this was taken to mean that the land--60 acres--would be laid off as townsite property and that the government would appraise it, and every person who had improvements on a lot would get the lot at one-half the government's appraised price, which is the rule in the government townsites.

That night there were many persons who, not being able to get anything substantial on the lots in the way of improvements, slept on the open ground to prevent some one else jumping the lot during the night. Next morning tents were put up and the jumpers commenced to build an opening of an Oklahoma town in the early days.

The case has not been finally decided upon yet, and the land may be finally awarded to Noah Frank, the Indian, who had the right to the land, or to the government, which has several contests to prove his prior right to it.

HENS IN LAYING CONTEST.

Winning Team of Four Leghorns Produce 251 Eggs in Four Months.

London.--For sixteen weeks 144 hens have been laying eggs against each other at the Lady Warwick agricultural college at Studley castle. The champion--a buff Orpington--laid 75 eggs in that time.

The birds were divided into pens, each pen containing four birds of the same breed, in order that some test as to the best laying strain might be applied.

The winning "team" consisted of four white Leghorns, which laid between them 251 eggs. A buff Orpington "team" was second, with 236 eggs, and a "team" of the same breed, among them the champion bird--was third, with 235 eggs. Some of the eggs weighed two and one-eighth ounces.

Long Distance Wireless. A wireless telegraph message which traveled a distance of 2,080 miles was received at sea by the steamer Moltke, which arrived in New York the other day. The message was sent Friday from the Poldhu wireless station, on the English coast, and contained 83 words.

Law rules the world but love is a law unto itself.

DISCOVER NEW GEM.

RARE BLUE TOPAZ FOUND IN AFRICA.

Recent Announcement Causes Considerable Stir Among Experts--Numerous Varieties of the Stone.

London.--The public interest manifested in the discovery in Rhodesia of what is believed to be a blue topaz has revealed some confusion in regard to this class of gem.

In addition to the true topaz, sometimes called "Brazilian" topaz, there are the yellow variety of sapphire, sometimes called "Oriental" topaz, a most lustrous gem of considerable value, and the yellow and brown quartz, known as "Scotch" or "Cairngorm" topaz, which is obtained in large quantities, and is of little value.

The true topaz, however, resembles these stones only in color, and can be easily distinguished by difference of hardness and specific gravity, says Leopold Claremont, the well-known lapidary. It is a transparent gem crystallizing in the rhombic system, generally occurring in right rhombic prisms, and is to be found in many different shades of yellow and brown, green, white, blue, and, rarely, pink and pale red.

Some of the dark yellow and brown specimens can be altered to a delicate pink by careful application of heat. Nearly all the pink topazes upon the market have been altered, or, to use the technical term, "pinked" in this way. Next to the pink variety in value comes the blue and greenish topaz. Although somewhat resembling the aquamarine in color and general effect, these varieties are much more brilliant owing to their greater hardness.

The localities in which the topaz occurs are, among others, Brazil, Siberia, Asia Minor, Pegu, Ceylon, Victoria, Bohemia, Saxony, Connecticut (U. S. A.) and Japan. The finest specimens, however, are derived from Brazil and Siberia. The chief sources of the topaz in Brazil are Minas Geras, Villa Rica and Neves mines, the last named being generally used in connection with the white variety. In Siberia the topaz occurs in many districts, notably the Altai and Ural mountains, near Nertchinsk, and also in Kamchatka.

If the recent announcement of the discovery of the blue topaz upon the property of the African Oplun syndicate in Rhodesia be duly confirmed, yet another source of supply of this variety of the gem is available.

SEIZE RARE OLD PICTURES.

Customs Officers Descend Upon Valuable Paintings in Maine Town.

Bangor.--United States customs authorities at Bangor made one of the most important seizures in years on December 30, and the matter has been kept dark until now. The articles seized were four rare old paintings, with an appraised value of \$2,100. The first known in Bangor concerning the pictures was an advertisement preliminary to the sale of the paintings by the United States marshal, which appeared in a Bangor morning paper.

Two of the pictures are about four feet square each, and represent allegories. They are valued by the local customs authorities at \$250 each. The third is a beautifully done landscape with a cathedral for the principal feature. This is appraised at \$600. The fourth is a very old portrait of a gentleman in velvet and neck ruff and is appraised at \$1,000.

The paintings undoubtedly came from Paris to St. John. They were sent from there to MacAdam and from thence brought across the line by team to Lambert Lake, where they were found and seized by the customs officers. The pictures are now in custody of United States Marshal Mayo and will be sold by auction on April 27.

American Bulls for Bullfights. Texas bulls have never before been used in the arena, but Felix Robert has selected a few for a trial, and the fight will be held Sunday. This will be the first time in the history of bullfighting that American bulls have been entered for the bull ring, and aficionados are anxiously awaiting for the corrida. Perhaps the day may not be far distant when the American ganaderias may furnish bulls for Mexican rings.

Woman Mineral Surveyor. Miss May Bradford, of Tonopah, Cal., is believed to be the only deputy mineral surveyor in the United States. She filed a \$10,000 bond and by proving her fitness has been given a commission by Surveyor General Kyle, of Reno. She has several contracts for surveying large mining properties in the mountains near Tonopah and Goldfield.

The Oregon's Long Pennant. When the Oregon went into San Francisco harbor recently from Manila, she flew a homeward-bound pennant from her masthead 553 feet long. Her necessary repairs will call for virtual reconstruction.

Branch to "Bust." It is alleged that the president's secretary, Mr. Loeb, was recently thrown by a broncho. As soon as the president gets time, remarks the same authority, the broncho will be properly "busted."

Fire Engines in Australia. Chemical fire engines are used in Sydney, Australia, and they are likely to be used largely hereafter to check bush fires during the summer months.

No man is as good or as bad as he is said to be.

CHINATOWN SECRETS.

PERISH WITH THE BURNING OF SAN FRANCISCO.

Underground Passages Wherein Many Prisoners and Mysteries Were Reduced to Ashes and Oblivion.

Los Angeles, Cal.--"For the first time in half a century the depths of Chinatown are open to the eyes of white men," said W. W. Overton, who reached Los Angeles among the refugees.

"No heap of smoking ruins marks the sight of the wooden warrens where the slat-eyed men of the Orient dwelt in thousands. The place is pitted with deep holes and seared with dark passageways, from whose depths come smoke wreaths. All the wood has gone and the winds are streaking the ashes.

"Men, white men, never knew the depth of Chinatown's underground city," says Mr. Overton. They often talked of these subterranean runways. And many of them had gone beneath the street levels two and three stories. But now that Chinatown has been unmasked, for the destroyed buildings were only a mask, men from the hillside have looked on where its inner secrets lay.

"In places they can see passages 100 feet deep. The fire swept this Mongolian section clean. It left no shreds of the painted wooden fabric. It ate down to the bare ground, and this lies stark, for the breeze have taken away the light ashes.

"Joss houses and mission schools, grocery stores and opium dens, gambling halls and theaters--all of them went. The buildings blazed up like tissue paper lanterns when the guttering candle touched their sides.

"From this place I saw hundreds of frenzied yellow men flee. In their arms they bore their opium pipes, their money bags, their silks and their children. Beside them ran the baggy trousered women, and some of them hobbled painfully.

"These were men and women of the surface. Far beneath the streets in those cellars and passageways were other lives. Women who never saw the day from their darkened prisons and blinking jailers were caught like rats in a huge trap. Their very bones were eaten by the flames.

"And now there remain only the holes. They pit the hillside like a multitude of ground swallow nests. They show depths which the police never knew. The secrets of those burrows will never be known, for into them the hungry fire first sifted its red coals and then licked eagerly in tongues of creeping flames, finally obliterating everything except the earth itself."

CHARM OF LONDON GONE.

Lament of an Englishman Recently Returned from Long Sojourn Abroad.

London.--"I am sorry I ever came back," said an Englishman who has just returned after an absence of ten years in Canada.

"The place I have thought about and dreamed of throughout my travels and which was so dear to me before I quitted England has disappeared. Gone are the picturesque buildings, obliterated are the historical associations and perished is the peculiar charm which made London so dear to its natives.

"In the place of it we have wide streets waiting for houses to border them; we have gigantic buildings with little claim to architectural beauty; we have tubes in all directions for the molelike population who love to burrow underground and who have a crowd of motor buses which make day and night alike hideous with their grunting, their screeching and their clatter. But the charm of London--the poetry of our great city--which was so indescribably fascinating has departed."

DID NOT FEEL A QUIVER.

Not a Brick Moved on Thickly Built Island a Few Rods from Frisco.

San Francisco.--There is one place within pistol shot of ruined San Francisco that the earthquake did not touch, that did not lose a chimney nor feel a tremor--Alcatraz island. Despite the fact that the island is covered with brick buildings, brick forts and brick chimneys, not a brick was loosened, not a crack made nor a quiver felt. When the scientist comes to write he will have his hands full explaining why Alcatraz did not have any physical damage of the event. The scene from the island was awe-inspiring. The crash of a falling city filled the ears of the aroused island, but no one understood what it was all about. There was no earthquake that he knew about, yet the city, a few hundred yards across the bay was crashing to ruin. No man on the island knew what was the matter until the boat landed at the shattered wharves.

Antwerp Art Exhibit. Preparations are being made in Antwerp for an exhibition of the paintings of Willem Linnig, who died 15 years ago, practically unknown. The exhibition is being organized by "Art Contemporain" to convince the artist's native city that it let a great master live and die unrecognized.

Marseilles Exposition. A great colonial exposition will be opened in Marseilles this spring, and continued throughout the summer. It will mark the first attempt to organize a comprehensive manifestation of French colonial work and is arousing much interest.

With Little Early Risers The famous little pills.



MRS. LOUIS LACOMBE.

SUFFERED FOR MONTHS.

Operation Advocated--Saved By Pe-ru-na.

Mrs. Louis Lacombe, Hayward, Wis., writes:

"I have followed your treatment as closely as I could and am now entirely well."

"We had two doctors and one said that I would have to have an operation performed before I could regain my health."

"We then decided to write you as to my condition, as I had been suffering nearly a year with severe pains and headaches at times so that I could scarcely stand up."

"Now I feel so well after a short treatment with your remedy, and am so grateful that I do not know how to express my thanks."

"I thank you many times for the kind advice I have had from you."

Write to Dr. S. B. Hartman, President of the Hartman Sanitarium, Columbus, Ohio, for free medical advice.

"Peruna is sold by your local druggists--Buy a bottle to-day."

FOR THE GARDENER.

New Varieties, a Beautiful Half-Acre of Petunias--New Forms of Old Flowers.

The newer verbenas has few leaves, a short upright stem and a truss, as the bunch of flowers is called, that attains a circumference of from 12 to 15 inches. The individual flowers, if the plants are properly grown are as large as a silver quarter. Their stocky growth has made them even stronger than they were, and they bloom now from seed during a whole summer. Some of the new colors this year are "Anora Boreale," which is a vivid scarlet, and the "Commandante Marechal," which is a blend of garnet and maroon.

One of the most beautiful exhibits every year in a garden near Bernardsville is a half acre devoted wholly to various kinds of petunias. They have been planted there as freely as if they were grass seed and the ground is covered with them. They are naturally a wonderful blend of color and there is scarcely a conceivable shade in the lighter hues that is not to be found there. The petunias are single flowers, and it is easy to conceive how much more beautiful this would be if the new double flower had been used instead. The doubles are exquisite crumpled balls of color, like velvet in their depth, and there are fluted petals, fringed petals and petals edged with two or three shades that contrast beautifully with the prevailing tint of the petunia. Some of the petals are crossed with different stripes of color. The shades in which the double petunias grow are sufficiently descriptive of the varieties to be had. They are amethyst, garnet, pink and crimson with green edges, pure rose pink, brilliant rosy scarlet, blended red and white, pure white, and mottled crimson and pink.

Primroses, in mauve, white and pink are nearly twice the size they were and the double poppy of the day is a ball of color as large as a peony, bearing only in its name and its brilliant scarlet hue a strong resemblance to its prototype. They are most beautiful in the solid colors, although the variegated combinations of color are popular. Lovers of the old-fashioned single poppy can still buy that in a much larger form than it used to grow. Asters are grown on the plants since this year until they are as large as chrysanthemums. All the old-fashioned flowers, such as phlox, larkspur, sweet william and wall flowers have gained in the experiments made by the growers during the past year, and they hopefully promise more for the future.

About Plants. It is best to wait until the plant shows it needs water, then give it a good dousing in the bathtub. A plant with its roots constantly in mud cannot thrive. If hot-house plants are watered once a week with water in which there is a little ammonia they will thrive well. Sometimes small white worms are found in the earth. Ammonia or lime water will kill them. Stir up the soil, to expose as many as possible, before pouring it on.

When applied and covered with a hot cloth Pinesive acts like a plaster. Best for burns, bruises, boils, etc., skin diseases, etc.

E. T. Whitehead & Co., Scotland Neck Leggett's drug store, Hobgood.